

the traveling public. They set an aggressive schedule for repairs, and they kept it.

The air traffic controllers, FAA employees, and contractors who responded to this crisis performed admirably and deserve our sincere thanks and appreciation. Under difficult circumstances, members of the National Air Traffic Controllers Association from throughout the Midwest rose to the challenge and kept the flying public safe. Within 4 days of the fire, O'Hare Airport regained its title as the busiest airport in the world.

I would like to say a special thank you to Toby Hauck, the Chicago Center NATCA Facility Representative; Gerry Waloszyk, the Chicago Center PASS facility Representative; Bill Cound, the Chicago Center Air Traffic Manager; Mike Paulsen, the Chicago Center Technical Operations Group Manager; and everyone else who worked to restore Chicago Center. Because of all of you, by October 13, repairs were completed, and Chicago Center returned to full capacity.

Mr. Speaker, important lessons have been learned, that the fire that crippled Chicago Center not only affected flights departing and arriving in the Midwest, but also those flying through Chicago's airspace to reach their destinations.

Between Friday and Sunday, more than 3,000 flights were canceled at O'Hare alone. The estimated cost to the airlines has been reported to be more than \$350 million in total. However, what made this crisis unique wasn't the number of delays or cancelled flights. It was that just one person was able to disrupt the travel plans of so many thousands of people.

The systems that protect the flying public must be made more robust. Although the fundamental redundancy had been built into the system—the ability for nearby radar systems to see into the Chicago airspace—the FAA must and is improving contingency plans to restore service much faster than it was able to do.

In the long term, the best way to ensure the safety and reliability of the National Airspace System is to facilitate the transition to the NextGen air traffic transportation system.

Mr. Speaker, currently, the ground-based radar system is the foundation of the National Airspace System. NextGen will rely on GPS satellites that are more accurate than ground-based radar. It will also include a transition from radio voice communications to a digital network that is similar to the mobile phone service. This transition to NextGen will enable air traffic controllers to reestablish air traffic control services much more quickly after this type of disaster.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in commending the FAA's response team on a job well done and to support the President's request for full funding for implementing NextGen in the 114th Congress.

#### THE OPEN ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the 30 million Americans who suffer from a rare disease. One in ten, Mr. Speaker, 10 percent of the country suffers from a rare disease.

Over 95 percent of these diseases have no treatments because each rare disease impacts a small number of patients. That is why I introduced the OPEN Act, the Orphan Product Extensions Now Accelerating Cures and Treatments.

My bill has the potential to help millions of people, and the idea was born from an event in my district. Over the summer, I held two 21st Century Cures roundtables in my district. The 21st Century Cures is a bipartisan initiative to examine and improve the discovery-development-delivery cycle.

Treatments for patients suffering from chronic and rare diseases, whether it is from medical devices or medicine, must be discovered on the ground level through basic science; developed into a practical, usable, and marketable product; and delivered to the patients so that the treatment may be effectively utilized.

Mr. Speaker, the first roundtable featured patients and patient advocates. From some of those patients, I heard about the importance of repurposing drugs. This led to the introduction of the OPEN Act. My bill will leverage the free market to incentivize drugs to be repurposed to treat rare diseases and pediatric cancers.

Repurposing drugs has a twofold benefit. First, the OPEN Act has the potential to result in new treatments for individuals with rare diseases. As I mentioned, the vast majority of individuals suffering from rare diseases don't have treatments, let alone cures; yet I hear often about individuals with rare diseases who will take medication that has not been tested for their condition.

The OPEN Act incentivizes the testing of mainstream drugs on rare diseases. This bill opens the door for new treatments. The OPEN Act can also create a new surge in biotechnology jobs and investments. Creating jobs and helping the sick are laudable goals, Mr. Speaker. My bill takes a step toward accomplishing that.

This bill can help millions of people. It will ensure repurposed medications are safe and effective for rare conditions and can be reimbursed through insurance coverage—so important. This is a bipartisan piece of legislation which I introduced with my colleagues, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. MCCAUL, and Mr. HASTINGS.

Helping those with rare diseases is a cause worth supporting, and I am proud to have introduced the OPEN Act.

#### AMERICA'S BRIGHT ECONOMIC FUTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to take note of the historic gains our economy made last month. With the recent addition of 314,000 new jobs, unemployment under 6 percent, and the best single-year job creation since the 1990s, our economic future looks bright, but we still have work to create a better economic future for American families.

I recently held my second annual hiring event where 400 jobseekers met with 75 employers looking to hire. I also hosted five job search boot camps where we taught jobseekers interview skills, how to prepare a resume, and strategies to successfully navigate hiring events.

My district is home to many innovative centers that will serve as engines in driving America's economy. I recently visited job training facilities like the Kankakee Area Career Center and the Canadian National job training center which are preparing people for careers in trades and transportation.

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With centers like these and workers like the ones we have in Illinois, I am optimistic about America's continued economic recovery. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue growing jobs here at home.

Lastly, I want to acknowledge two women. The first we have heard about already, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. FUDGE), the great leader of the CBC. MARCIA has taken the CBC to another level. Also, MARCIA has taken a special election freshman like me and helped me make it through my first session.

MARCIA, I want to thank you for the faith you have in me for asking me to become the next CBC Health Care Brain Trust chair. I thank you and I salute you. The CBC is not only fortunate to have you, the Deltas are, the Links are, Congress is, and the great State of Ohio. Thank you so much.

Lastly, like my colleague Representative RODNEY DAVIS, I want to acknowledge the passing of Illinois' comptroller, Judy Baar Topinka. Judy was a true public servant who combined service and fun. She definitely made her mark in Illinois serving as the first female treasurer, the head of the Republican Party, and then as comptroller. Judy had a special way of relating with all people. My thoughts and prayers are with Judy's family, friends, and staff.

#### THE CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, the constitutional issues involving the